



Active Directory is the Major backbone for UAEU for all authentication and authorization services. Most of UAEU services use Active Directory for authentication and authorization such as email, eLearning, desktop authentication, etc.

An AD domain controller authenticates and authorizes all users and computers in a Windows domain type network. For example, when a user logs into a computer that is part of a Windows domain, Active Directory checks the submitted password and determines whether the user is a system administrator or a regular user. AD is also responsible for installing or updating software and assigning and enforcing security policies for all computers.

Domain Upgrade

Active Directory (AD) is a directory service created by Microsoft for Windows domain networks and included in most Windows Server Operating Systems. It is known at UAEU as “Academics” domain.

Active Directory was previewed in 1999 and first released with Windows NT server. Then it was included with Windows 2000 Server edition and revised to extend functionality and improve administration in Windows Server® 2003.

Additional improvements were made in Windows Server 2003 R2, Windows Server® 2008 and Windows Server® 2008 R2, and with the release of the latter the domain controller role was renamed *Active Directory Domain Services*.

The UAEU Domain functional level was at 2003 32-bit, but as part of UITs continuous service improvement and using the latest technologies the decision was made to upgrade the domain functional level to 2008 R2 64-bit. The project was started and completed by UITs team.

By raising the domain functional levels, Active Directory 2008 R2 Domain Services make it possible for UITs to introduce advanced features into our environment and allows UAEU to take advantage of the improved security that is offered by the Windows Server® 2008 and Windows Server® 2008 R2 operating systems.

Using 64-bit OS capability to handle the load helped UITs to reduce the number of domain controllers used to serve the UAEU community better and faster in administration by introducing new features that did not exist in the 2003 functional level.

By Hussein Jaradat